Minimum Wages

*207. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of employment schemes in which minimum wages have been fixed in the country, in Centre/States/UTs separately;

(b) in the scheduled employment of agriculture how much is the lowest daily wages fixed;

(c) the lowest rate of minimum wages prevailing in other scheduled employments; and

(d) whether Government are aware that many of the wage rates fixed under the Minimum Wages Act is below the poverty line, and the steps taken to rectify this injustice?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (d) Under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, minimum wages are fixed/revised for scheduled employments notified by the appropriate Government i.e., both Central and State Governments. The details of the number of scheduled employments and range of minimum rates of wages both for "agriculture" and "all scheduled employments" as fixed by the Central/State/UT Governments are as under:

(As on 1-1-1999)

Central/State/UT Governments	No. of employments for which minimum wages have been fixed/ revised.	Minimum Rates of wages (Rs. per day) for Unskilled workers in scheduled employments			
		All Employments		Agriculture	
		Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
I. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT*	44	46.22	84.12	77.12	84.12
II. STATE					
1. Andhra Pradesh	60	27.00	63.19	30.00	36.50
2. Arunachal Pradesh	25	35.60	37.60	35.60	37.60
3. Assam	62	32.80	55.80	38.60	45.00
4. Bihar	74	38.61	51.00	38.61	—
5. Goa	23	21.00	125.00	58.00	—
6. Gujarat	49	34.00	92.40	34.00	—
7. Haryana	56	70.12	73.12	70.12	74.12
8. Himachal Pradesh	24	26.00	45.75	26.00	45.75

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
9. Jammu &Kashmir	18	30.00	30.00	30.00	—
10. Karnataka	59	26.00	74.00	26.00	—
11. Kerala	40	30.00	157.81	30.00	40.20
12. Madhya Pradesh	36	49.46	56.46	49.46	—
13. Maharashtra	62	42.46	85.92	39.00	41.00
14. Manipur	5	44.65	49.50	52.00	55.00
15. Meghalaya	22	35.00	35.00	50.00	—
16. Mizoram	3	45.00	45.00	70.00	—
17. Nagaland	36	25.00	25.00	25.00	—
18. Orissa	83	42.50	42.50	42.50	—
19. Punjab	60	54.07	60.96	59.11	65.66
20. Rajasthan	38	32.00	44.00	44.00	—
21. Sikkim	Minimum Wages Act, 1948 is yet to be extended and enforced.				
22. Tamil Nadu	60	22.40	82.72	54.00	—
23. Tripura	11	17.70	36.00	40.00	—
24. Uttar Pradesh	65	42.02	64.21	47.00	49.00
25. West Bengal	45	36.55	79.99	48.14	51.34
III. UNION TERRITORIES					
26. A & N Islands	5	50.00	86.76	50.00	53.00
27. Chandigarh	44	52.09	71.93	52.09	60.15
28. Dadar &Nagar Haveli	43	38.00	38.00	38.00	—
29. Daman & Diu	72	50.00	60.00	35.00	—
30. Delhi	29	90.30	90.30	90.30	—
31. Lakshadweep	9	41.46	41.46	45.00	—
32. Pondicherry	4	19.25	65.00	19.25	40.00

N.B.:— Wages also include the Variable Dearness Allowance linked to Consumer Price Index wherever provided.
*As on 1.10.99.
—single rate i.e. same as in column (5).

The Minimum Wages Act does not define "minimum wage" nor does it lay down the norms and criteria for fixation of minimum wages. Minimum wages are fixed either by the Committee method or by the Direct Notification method by the appropriate government after taking into account the socio-economic and agro-climatic conditions of a particular area, cost of living as reflected in Consumer Price Index, the recommendations of various committees and judicial pronouncements. The question of linking minimum wages with poverty line has been discussed in various fora but no consensus has emerged on such linkage so far.